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JICA'S INDUSTRIAL AREA FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PROJECT SEEN TO EASE FLOODING WOES IN CAVITE PROVINCE

TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite (PIA)

The Provincial Government of Cavite is working with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to built infrastructure projects that will help address flooding in key areas.

Eloisa Rozul, Department Head of the Office of the Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer (OPDRMO), in an interview with the Philippine Information Agency – CALABARZON

confirmed that the Cavite Industrial Area Flood Risk Management project will help reduce flooding in urbanized and industrial parts of the province.

“Cavite has experienced rapid urbanization over the past decades, resulting in increased paved surfaces, reduced natural drainage, and higher flood runoff during heavy rainfall.”

The project will benefit low-lying areas, particularly the cities of Bacoor and Imus, as well as Kawit, Noveleta, Rosario, and Tanza towns which experience regular

flooding due to San Juan River, Imus River, and Ylang-Ylang River, as well as interconnected drainage systems leading to Manila Bay.

Moreover, Rozul noted that the provincial government is also pushing local government units to pass local legislature creating infrastructure audit teams and school safety officers to ensure the integrity and safety of public infrastructure.

“We recommended legislative measures to the Sangguniang

Panlalawigan through the PDRMC Chairperson for the enactment of DRRM-related ordinances.”

Rozul noted that key policies that they have recommended included the ordinances for the creation of an Infrastructure Audit Team, while other policies such as the Designation of Safety Offices in Elementary and Secondary School and the Ordinance on Safety Waters are being approved for first reading and are undergoing the crafting of Internal Rules and Regulations, respectively.

The Cavite Industrial Area Flood Risk Management project includes major engineering interventions, such as the construction of a Flood Retarding Basin designed to retain excess floodwater temporarily during heavy rainfall and gradually release it after the storm, thereby reducing downstream flooding. Improvements on riverbeds, floodways and diversion channels, drainage systems, and bridge networks are also

underway to help reduce flooding by redirecting excess floodwater towards Manila Bay.

As the province continues to invest on flood mitigation infrastructure, the official emphasized that public support is key in strengthening disaster preparedness and recovery efforts.

“Together, we continue to improve our preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience to better protect lives, livelihoods, and the future of our province. Disasters may not always be prevented, but we can significantly reduce their impacts by working together, planning ahead, and acting responsibly.”

With some of its cities connected to Metro Manila, Cavite Province frequently experience province especially in parts of Bacoor, Imus, Kawit, Noveleta, Rosario, General Trias, Tanza, and Dasmariñas, particularly during prolonged rains, tropical cyclones, and high tide. (PB-PIA CALABARZON) **BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**



TRECE MARTIRES CITY, Cavite (PIA)

Farmer groups in Cavite province will continue supplying their products to the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA), further expanding market opportunities for Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) in the province.

Last July 2, Police Brigadier General Redrico Maranan, PNPA Acting Director signed a Marketing Agreement with three (3) additional Agrarian Reform Beneficiary Organizations (ARBOs) to formalize their continuing supply partnership at the PNPA.

Aside from Tres Cruses Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Farmers Association, Inc. and Daine 1&2 Farmers Association, Inc., the PNPA also forged new partnerships with Barangay Tua Farmers Agriculture Cooperative, also based in Cavite.

In a statement, DAR Cavite Provincial Office noted that the expanded marketing agreement reflects PNPA's confidence in local farmers, especially in providing meals for their cadets and staff.

“[This partnership reflects] the Academy's continued confidence in the quality, consistency, and reliability of the agricultural products supplied by the two ARBOs.”

Under the agreement, partner ARBOs will directly supply the Cadets' Mess Hall with fresh agricultural products providing local farmers with a stable institutional market while ensuring the Academy's continuous supply of fresh, quality produce.

This will also provide the PNPA with more direct suppliers of fresh agricultural products as part of the DAR's bid to strengthen institutional market linkages and sustainable opportunities for ARBs.

The PNPA welcomes hundreds of cadets each year, with graduates serving in the Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). (PB-PIA Cavite, DAR Cavite Provincial Office) **BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**



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MOST WANTED SA PATONG-PATONG NA KASONG ESTAFA, ARESTADO NG GENERAL TRIAS PULIS

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite – Matagumpay na naaresto ng mga operatiba ng General Trias Component City Police Station (CCPS) ang isang City Level Most Wanted Person sa isinagawang manhunt operation sa Brgy. San Juan 2, General Trias City, Cavite, bandang 6:00 ng umaga noong Hulyo 16, 2026.

Kinilala ang naarestong akusado na si alyas "Jeany", 39 taong gulang at residente ng Brgy. San Juan 2, General Trias City, Cavite.

Isinagawa ng Warrant Section ng General Trias CCPS ang operasyon laban sa wanted person. Naaresto ang akusado sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa tatlong (3) bilang ng kasong Estafa sa ilalim ng Article 315, Paragraph 2(a) ng Revised Penal Code. Ang naturang warrant ay inilabas ng Presiding Judge ng Municipal Trial Court, Fourth Judicial Region, Rosario, Cavite, na may petsang Hulyo 15, 2026, na may inirekomendang piyansa na ₱18,000.00 para sa bawat kaso.

Matapos ang pag-aresto,

REGIONAL LEVEL MOST WANTED, ARESTADO NG BACOR PULIS

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite – Matagumpay na naaresto ng mga operatiba ng Bacoor Component City Police Station ang isang Regional Level Most Wanted Person sa isinagawang manhunt operation sa Brgy. Bayanan, Bacoor City, Cavite, bandang 10:55 ng umaga noong Hulyo 15, 2026.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL ALEXIE A DESAMITO, Hepe ng Bacoor CCPS ang naarestong akusado na si alyas "Ate," 42 taong gulang, at residente ng Brgy. Molino III, Bacoor City, Cavite.

Isinagawa ng mga tauhan ng Warrant Section ng Bacoor CCPS ang operasyon na nagresulta sa matagumpay na pagkakaaresto sa akusado sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest kaugnay ng paglabag sa Sections 5 at 11, Article II ng Republic Act No. 9165 (Comprehensive

ipinaalam sa akusado ang dahilan ng kanyang pagkakaaresto at ang kanyang mga karapatang konstitusyonal sa wikang kanyang nauunawaan. Kasalukuyang nakapiit ang akusado sa General Trias CCPS Custodial Facility sa Brgy. Bagumbayan, General Trias City, Cavite, habang hinihintay ang pagbabalik ng warrant sa korte at ang paglalabas ng kaukulang Commitment Order.

Pinuri ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, ang matagumpay na operasyon ng General Trias CCPS bilang patunay ng patuloy na pagsisikap ng Cavite PPO na tugisin at papanagutin ang mga taong may kinakaharap na kaso sa batas.

"Patuloy ang ating manhunt operations laban sa mga wanted person upang matiyak na maihaharap sila sa hukuman. Ang bawat matagumpay na pag-aresto ay nagpapakita ng ating matatag na dedikasyon sa pagpapatupad ng batas at sa pagpapanatili ng kapayapaan at kaayusan sa lalawigan ng Cavite."

Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002).

Ang warrant ay na inilabas ng Presiding Judge ng Regional Trial Court, Branch 114, Bacoor City, Cavite, noong Marso 25, 2026, para sa Service of Sentence. Ipinaalam sa akusado ang dahilan ng kanyang pagkakaaresto at ang kanyang mga karapatan alinsunod sa batas sa wikang kanyang nauunawaan. Kasalukuyang siyang nasa kustodiya ng Bacoor Custodial Facility, habang isinasagawa ang pagbabalik ng kopya ng warrant sa korte na nagpalabas nito.

Pinuri ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, ang matagumpay na operasyon ng Bacoor CCPS at binigyang-diin ang patuloy na kampanya ng Cavite PPO laban sa mga pinaghahanap ng batas.

"Ang matagumpay na pagkakaaresto sa isang

SUSPEK, ARESTADO SA SEARCH WARRANT OPERATION NG ROSARIO PULIS; ILEGAL NA BARIL NASAMSAM

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite – Matagumpay na naaresto ng mga operatiba ng Rosario Municipal Police Station ang isang suspek at nakasamsam ng isang hindi lisensyadong baril sa isinagawang implementasyon ng Search Warrant sa Brgy. Silangan 1, Rosario, Cavite, bandang 3:30 ng hapon noong Hulyo 15, 2026.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL ARDIE O BAGAMAN, Hepe ng Rosario MPS, ang naarestong suspek na si alyas "Shyder," 41 taong gulang, at residente ng Brgy. Silangan 1, Rosario, Cavite.

Sa ilalim ng kampanya laban sa Loose Firearms, ipinatupad ng mga operatiba ng Station Drug Enforcement Unit ng Rosario MPS ang Search Warrant na inisyu ng Regional Trial Court, Branch 16, Cavite City, noong Hulyo 8, 2026, kaugnay ng paglabag sa Republic Act No. 10591 o Comprehensive Firearms and Ammunition Regulation Act of 2013.

Ang paghahalugog ay isinagawa sa harap ng mga saksi kabilang ang Barangay Councilor at Media Representative, na lumagda sa inventory

receipt at certification of orderly search.

Sa isinagawang operasyon, nakumpiska ang mga sumusunod na ebidensya: Isang (1) kalibre .38 na revolver na walang serial number; Isang (1) live ammunition ng kalibre .38; at Isang (1) itim na sling bag.

Ang mga nakumpiskang ebidensya ay dadalhin sa Cavite Provincial Forensic Unit para sa ballistic examination, habang inihahanda ang mga kaukulang dokumento para sa inquest proceedings sa Office of the Provincial Prosecutor.

Pinuri ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, ang matagumpay na operasyon ng Rosario MPS bilang bahagi ng pinaigting na kampanya laban sa mga ilegal na baril.

"Patuloy nating paiigtingin ang ating kampanya laban sa mga ilegal na baril dahil mahalaga ang bawat matagumpay na operasyon upang mapanatili ang kapayapaan at maiwasan ang paggamit ng mga armas sa paggawa ng krimen. Ang Cavite PPO ay nananatiling tapat sa mandato nitong protektahan ang bawat mamamayan." — PCOL ARIEL R RED.

CALABARZON'S RAPE MOST WANTED, ARESTADO NG TRECE MARTIRES PULIS

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite – Naaresto ng mga operatiba ng Trece Martires Component City Police Station ang isang Regional Most Wanted Person sa isinagawang manhunt operation sa Purok 4, Brgy. San Agustin, Trece Martires City, Cavite, bandang 4:40 ng hapon noong Hulyo 15, 2026.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL BRYIAN

Regional Level Most Wanted Person ay patunay ng ating matatag na paninindigan na tiyaking walang makatatapas sa kamay ng batas. Patuloy nating paiigtingin ang ating mga operasyon upang mapanatili ang kapayapaan at kaligtasan ng ating mga komunidad." — PCOL ARIEL R RED

D MERINO, Chief of Police ng Trece Martires CCPS, ang naarestong akusado na si alyas "Luis", 50 taong gulang, at residente ng Purok 4, Brgy. San Agustin, Trece Martires City.

Isinagawa ang operasyon sa ilalim ng Simultaneous Anti-Criminality Law Enforcement Operations ng Warrant Section ng Trece Martires CCPS. Naaresto ang akusado sa bisa ng Warrant of Arrest para sa dalawang (2) bilang ng kasong Rape, na inilabas ng Presiding Judge ng Regional Trial Court, Branch 62, Gumaca, Quezon, na may petsang Setyembre 9, 2014, na walang pyansang inilaan. Ipinaalam din sa akusado ang kanyang mga karapatang konstitusyonal sa wikang

Camp BGen Pantaleon Garcia, Imus City, Cavite – Apat na Street Level Individuals ang naaresto ng mga operatiba ng Dasmariñas Component City Police Station sa isinagawang buy-bust operation sa Brgy. Sabang, Dasmariñas City, Cavite, bandang 1:05 ng madaling araw noong Hulyo 15, 2026. Nasamsam sa operasyon ang humigit-kumulang 20 gramo ng hinihinalang shabu na may tinatayang Standard Drug Price na ₱136,000.00.

Kinilala ni PLTCOL MAC ARTHUR S MERCADER, Hepe ng Dasmariñas CCPS, ang mga naaresto na sina: alyas "Bossing," 34 taong gulang, residente ng Brgy. Pasong Camachile II, General Trias City, Cavite, na nahaharap sa kasong paglabag sa Sections 5 at 11, Article II ng RA 9165; alyas "Jose", 43 taong gulang, residente ng Imus City, Cavite, na nahaharap sa kasong paglabag sa Section 11 ng parehong batas; alyas "Dennis", 29 taong gulang, residente ng Brgy. Pasong Camachile II, General Trias City, Cavite, na nahaharap din sa kasong paglabag sa Section 11; at alyas "Mary", 38 taong gulang, residente ng Brgy. Sabang, Dasmariñas City,

na nahaharap sa kasong paglabag sa Sections 11 at 26 ng RA 9165.

Isinagawa ng mga operatiba ng Dasmariñas CCPS ang anti-illegal drugs operation na may koordinasyon sa Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency. Naaresto ang mga suspek matapos bentahan ng isang sachet ng hinihinalang shabu ang isang police poseur-buyer kapalit ng ₱500.00 na buy-bust money. Sa isinagawang body search at inventory, narekober pa ang karagdagang apat (4) na sachet ng hinihinalang shabu at isang brown leather coin purse.

Nakumpiska sa operasyon ang mga sumusunod na ebidensya: limang (5) heat-sealed transparent plastic sachets na naglalaman ng hinihinalang Methamphetamine Hydrochloride o shabu na may kabuuang timbang na humigit-kumulang 20 gramo at tinatayang Standard Drug Price na ₱136,000.00; isang (1) ₱500.00 na buy-bust money; at isang (1) brown leather coin purse.

Kasalukuyang nakapiit ang mga suspek sa Dasmariñas CCPS Custodial Facility, habang ang mga nakumpiskang ebidensya ay isasailalim sa laboratory examination. Inihahanda na rin ang mga kaukulang dokumento para sa inquest proceedings sa Office of the City Prosecutor.

Pinuri ni PCOL ARIEL R RED, Provincial Director ng Cavite Police Provincial Office, ang matagumpay na operasyon ng Dasmariñas CCPS bilang patunay ng patuloy na kampanya laban sa ilegal na droga.

"Hindi titigil ang Cavite PPO sa pagsugpo sa ilegal na droga na sumisira sa kinabukasan ng ating mga mamamayan. Patuloy nating paiigtingin ang ating mga operasyon laban sa mga sangkot sa bentahan at paggamit ng ipinagbabawal na gamot upang mapanatiling ligtas ang ating mga komunidad." — PCOL ARIEL R RED.

ay patunay ng ating matatag na dedikasyon sa pagpapatupad ng batas at pagpapanatili ng kapayapaan at kaayusan sa lalawigan ng Cavite."

DOST CALABARZON AND FOCAL LABS EMPOWER ACADEMIC INNOVATORS AT YEAR 2 TECHGROW SERIES FINALE

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Calabarzon, in a dynamic partnership with Focal Labs Group, successfully spearheaded the second year of the TECHGROW Ladderized Capability-Building Training Series. With the theme, "From Research to Commercially Impactful Innovation", this comprehensive five-module initiative was designed to empower academic institutions and fortify the regional innovation ecosystem. The year commenced with the virtual delivery of Modules 1 and 2, setting a solid foundation for the highly anticipated face-to-face sessions. On July 9, 2026, the series reached its climax at Hotel Casiana and Events Center in Tagaytay City, Cavite, where Modules 3, 4, and 5 were conducted in a face-to-face mode. DOST CALABARZON Regional Director Ms. Emelita P. Bagsit officially opened the event, emphasizing that the gathering was far more than a conclusion to a training series—it was a vibrant celebration of learning, collaboration, and a shared commitment to impactful innovation.

The core of the day's discussions was facilitated by the executive leadership of Focal Labs Group, including Co-founder and Chief Innovation Officer Mr. Richmon "Mon" S. Corres, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer Mr. John Francis M. Bernardo, and Chief Finance Officer Mr. Karl Christopher A. Leyco. The expert trio proficiently guided participants through Module 3: Innovation and Academic Entrepreneurship

and Module 4: Commercialization and Impact Communication. This culminated in Module 5: The Innovation Demo Day, an interactive pitch session where academic innovators stepped into the spotlight to present their forward-thinking concepts.

The venue buzzed with energy as enthusiastic participants immersed themselves in every workshop and collaborative activity. The high caliber of the presentations was evident during the Demo Day, where the most impressive pitches were recognized with awards for their creativity and market potential. Bringing the landmark event to a close, DOST Cavite Provincial Director and CALABARZON FOB Regional Coordinator, Ms. Gilda S. De Jesus, highlighted the showcase's profound value. She noted that the Innovation Demo Day provided an invaluable platform for participants to showcase their ideas, receive expert feedback, and take a pivotal step toward translating academic research into real-world technologies that benefit both local industries and communities.

This event serves as a vital bridge between academic research and commercial viability. By equipping educators and researchers with entrepreneurial skills, DOST Calabarzon and Focal Labs are ensuring that local scientific advancements do not just stay in classrooms, but are actively transformed into real-world solutions that drive economic growth and uplift Filipino communities.

DOST CAVITE



DA DRIVES POST HARVEST MODERNIZATION FOR GROWING CAVITE PINEAPPLE INDUSTRY

TAGAYTAY CITY, Cavite (PIA) — Known for its growing pineapple industry, the Department of Agriculture in CALABARZON is pushing for modernized post-harvest management in Tagaytay City, Cavite.

Last July 1, the Department of Agriculture (DA) CALABARZON launched a training as part of the High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP) in a bid to enhance their knowledge on modern practices on pineapple farming.

The training covered a wide range of topics including Pineapple Production and Post-Harvest Management, Pests and Diseases Identification and Management, Soil Fertility Management and Creating Healthy Soil Through Soil Rejuvenation and Safe Pest Management.

With the aid of modern technology, the training aimed to elevate pineapple production in Tagaytay City and respond to the current issues the industry faces.

In a statement, the DA CALABARZON said it hoped that the training helped local farmers improve their productivity.

"Inasahang magsisilbing gabay ang mga kaalamang ibinahagi sa pagsasanay upang higit na mapaunlad ang produksyon ng pinya at mapalakas ang kalagayan ng mga magsasaka sa rehiyon sa pamamagitan ng paggamit ng mga makabago at angkop na teknologiya."

Known for its cool weather, Tagaytay City is one of the major pineapple producers in Luzon. (PB-PIA Cavite, with reports from DA-CALABARZON/Facebook) **BY PATRICIA BERMUDEZ**

PGC MARKS HYPERTENSION AWARENESS MONTH WITH MEDICAL AND DENTAL MISSION IN CARMONA

Reinforcing its commitment to preventive healthcare, the Provincial Government of Cavite (PGC) joined the celebration of Hypertension Awareness Month through the #BeSurePresyonAyCheck campaign by conducting a Medical and Dental Mission at the Carmona Community Center on July 14, 2026, bringing essential healthcare services closer to residents.

A total of 581 residents benefited from the outreach program, which provided 337 medical consultations, 18 dental extractions, 221 Free Blood Sugar (FBS) tests, and 5 Electrocardiogram (ECG) procedures, promoting early detection and proper management of hypertension and other health conditions.

Medical consultations and dental extractions were provided by the healthcare

professionals of the General Emilio Aguinaldo Memorial Hospital (GEAMH) in collaboration with the Rural Health Unit (RHU) of Carmona City, while free maintenance medicines were distributed by the Office of the Provincial Governor (OPG) staff to support the patients continuing healthcare needs.

The activity was conducted in collaboration with the Local Government of Carmona, with the presence of Vice Mayor Cesar Ines Jr., members of the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Carmona City, and Congressman Roy M. Loyola, underscoring the shared commitment of provincial and local leaders to promoting accessible, responsive, and community-based healthcare for every Caviteño. — **OPIO**

EDITORIAL

Hustisya sa Kalsada: Proteksyon para sa mga Kumakayod nang Patas

Nakakalungkot isipin na ang isang rider na nagtatrabaho lamang para sa kaniyang pamilya ay kinitil ang buhay ng angkas na pasahero at tinangay ang motor. Sa panahon ngayon, mahirap makipagsapalaran sa buhay dahil sa mga taong ayaw lumaban o kumayod ng patas. Kahit anong suliranin, hindi solusyon ang manglamang o kumitil ng buhay upang makuha ang mga nais. Sana palaganapin at pagtuunan ng pansin ang seguridad para sa mga mamamayang gusto lang maghanap-buhay at makauwi nang ligtas sa kanilang pamilya.

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SSS CHIEF LAUDS VISA, RCBC-POWERED FARE SYSTEM ROLLOUT

Social Security System (SSS) President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Joseph M. de Claro tested the new cashless fare system on Monday, 13 July 2026, at LRT-2's Legarda Station during the launch of the Automated Fare Collection System (AFCS), praising the rollout as a boost to commuter convenience.

Department of Finance (DOF) Secretary and Social Security Commission (SSC) Chairperson Frederick D. Go also graced the launch. The AFCS, an initiative led by the Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) and the Department of Transportation (DOTr),

aims to streamline fare payments, reduce reliance on cash, and provide commuters with a faster and more seamless travel experience.

The cashless fare system is powered by Visa and Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC), an SSS partner bank for the MySSS Card. As part of RCBC's PISO Fare Cashback Promo, holders of the MySSS Card powered by RCBC DiskarTech may enjoy the promo from July 13 to July 31 when using their card, allowing eligible cardholders to ride for as low as ₱1, subject to the promo's terms and conditions. #



KOREAN CYBER GAMBLING FUGITIVE INTERCEPTED AT NAIA – BI

MANILA – The Bureau of Immigration (BI) has arrested a 52-year-old Korean national wanted by the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) for allegedly operating a massive illegal online gambling syndicate. In a news release Thursday, BI Commissioner Joel Anthony Viado said Cho Yungeon, also known as Cho Min, was arrested on July 15 at the departure area of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 1 in Pasay City by operatives of the BI's Fugitive Search Unit, in

coordination with South Korean authorities, Philippine National Police-Interpol Group and the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Commission.

Cho is the subject of an arrest warrant issued by the Busan District Court for allegedly operating an illegal online gambling website from Makati City since January 2024.

His group allegedly accepted bets on domestic and international sporting events, processed online deposits, paid out winnings based on betting odds,

MANILA – The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) underscored the importance of sustained engagement with civil society in crafting more responsive fiscal policies, as government and non-government stakeholders convened to discuss the country's medium-term economic outlook and budget priorities.

Speaking during the "Fiscal Priorities and Economic Dialogue: A DBCC-Civil Society Outlook" at the DBM Central Office on Wednesday, Acting Budget Secretary Kim Robert De Leon said meaningful reforms require continuous consultation and collaboration between the government and the public.

"At the Department of Budget and Management, we believe that listening is also public service," De Leon said, as quoted in a DBM statement on Thursday.

"Every meaningful reform begins with one simple act — the willingness to listen," he added.

The dialogue, organized by the Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) and the Philippine Open Government Partnership (PH-OGP), gathered representatives

and also offered casino games such as baccarat.

BI records show that Cho entered the Philippines in 2019 using a Cambodian passport under the name Cho Min, while biometric verification later confirmed that he was the same individual as wanted Korean national Cho Yungeon.

The foreign national was turned over to the BI Warden Facility, where he will remain in detention pending deportation proceedings. **(PNA) BY FERDINAND PATINIO**

DBM, CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHEN FISCAL POLICY DIALOGUE

from government agencies, civil society organizations, business groups, academic institutions, and policy research organizations to exchange views on the country's macroeconomic assumptions, fiscal program, and budget priorities.

The DBCC is the interagency body responsible for setting the government's macroeconomic assumptions, fiscal targets, and expenditure framework that serve as the basis for the annual national budget.

The activity forms part of the government's continuing efforts under the PH-OGP to institutionalize citizen participation in fiscal governance and promote transparency and accountability in public finance.

De Leon said government policies become more effective when they are shaped not only by technical analysis but also by the experiences and recommendations of stakeholders.

"We cannot build better governance alone. We need you — not only as our partners and collaborators — but also as constructive critics who continuously challenge us to improve," he said.

He added that regular consultations ultimately lead to better governance and improved public services.

"Every conversation we share today is an investment in better governance. And every better decision we make together brings us one step closer to the kind of government our people deserve," De Leon said.

DBM Undersecretary Wilford Will Wong, who also serves as senior supervising official of the PH-OGP Program Management Office, assured participants that the recommendations raised during the dialogue would be considered in future fiscal planning.

"Every insight will be carefully documented and consolidated to actively

DOLE REVISES INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES TO PREPARE YOUTH FOR GOV'T CAREERS

MANILA – The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has revised the guidelines of the Government Internship Program (GIP) to better prepare Filipino youth for long-term careers in public service.

Labor Secretary Francis Tolentino signed Department Order No. 204-C, Series of 2026 on July 14 to strengthen the program's implementation and provide greater protection for government interns and partner agencies.

In a news release Thursday, the DOLE said the updated guidelines provide greater flexibility in determining internship durations and establish a mechanism to transfer interns to another partner agency when an internship is pre-terminated through no fault of the intern.

The revised Department Order provides for an

show our next steps. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that your inputs refine our fiscal policies, making them more responsive, inclusive, and evidence-based," he said.

During the forum, DBM Assistant Secretary Romeo Matthew Balanquit, chairperson of the DBCC Executive Technical Board, presented the committee's latest approved medium-term macroeconomic assumptions and fiscal program before a panel discussion with representatives from the DBCC and participating organizations.

Participants included representatives from the Makati Business Club, Action for Economic Reforms, IBON Foundation, People's Budget Coalition, Social Watch, Ateneo de Manila University School of Government, University of the Philippines, De La Salle University, and other civil society and academic institutions.

(PNA) BY DARRYL JOHN ESGUERRA

internship duration of three to six months and may be renewed for another six months.

Upon the recommendation of a partner agency, interns who qualify for renewal must be assigned tasks that will enable them to acquire competencies aligned with potential contractual, casual, or permanent positions in government service.

Beyond providing short-term income, the DOLE added that the program serves as a stepping stone toward public service careers for young Filipinos, reinforcing the Department's thrust to equip Filipino youth with future-ready skills by fostering synergy among academe, government, and industry.

To ensure that returning interns continue to benefit from meaningful learning opportunities, the DOLE noted that partner agencies must submit a recommendation that includes the intern's performance evaluation, the competencies that still require enhancement, and the agency's intent to hire or absorb the intern, subject to the intern's willingness and applicable Civil Service Commission rules and regulations.

The revised guidelines also safeguard interns affected by circumstances beyond their control.

If an internship is pre-terminated through no fault of the intern or due to force majeure or other extraordinary circumstances, the DOLE may facilitate the intern's transfer to another partner agency, provided there is an available placement, a new internship agreement is executed, and the remaining internship period does not exceed the unserved portion of the original internship.

According to a report from the Bureau of Local Employment, a total of 14,818 Filipino youth gained government internship experience under the program to date. **(PNA) BY FERDINAND PATINIO**



CARD MRI NAGSAGAWA NG MEDIA LAKBAY-ARAL SA CAGAYAN DE ORO



Bilang bahagi ng PANAGHIUSA: CARD MRI Exposure Tour Program sa CDO, makikitang nagluluto ng chicharon si Jaime Bedro (una mula sa kaliwa) habang iniinterbyu at kinukuhanan ng larawan ng mga mamamahayag.

Labintatlong mamamahayag mula sa Northern Mindanao ang nakiisa sa ikalawang PANAGHIUSA: CARD MRI Exposure Tour Program na ginanap sa Cagayan de Oro City mula Mayo 25-27, 2026. Layunin ng programa na mas maipakilala sa mga mamamahayag ang mga programa at serbisyo ng CARD Mutually Reinforcing Institutions (CARD MRI) at maipakita ang mga ginagawa nito upang makatulong sa paglaban sa kahirapan.

Ayon kay CARD MRI Publishing House President Marilyn Magampon Manila, nananatiling nakatuon ang CARD MRI sa pagtulong sa mga mahihirap sa pamamagitan ng mga programang tumutugon sa kanilang pangangailangan. "Ang misyon ng CARD MRI ay nakasentro sa aming hangaring makatulong sa paglaban sa kahirapan at patuloy na mapabuti ang aming paglilingkod sa mga kliyente sa pamamagitan ng mga produkto at serbisyon tunay na tumutugon sa kanilang mga pangangailangan," ani Manila. Dagdag pa niya, "Nais naming makatuwang ang mga mamamahayag na may kaparehong adhikain upang mas maipalaganap ang mensaheng ito at mas maipabatid sa publiko ang mahalagang papel ng microfinance sa pagpapabuti ng buhay ng mga tao at ng kanilang mga komunidad."

Kabilang sa mga lumahok sa programa sina Panguil Bay Journal COO Cyril

Cabrera; Malindang Newline Mobile Journalist Cush Berenguel; Misamis Network News Mobile Journalist Glenn Ray Roluma; RMN INC News Director Menzie Montes; Radyo Asenso 106.7 Mobile Journalist Yvonne Berenguel; Radyo Trumpeta Anchorman Ercel Maandig; DXCC RMN Newswriter and Reporter Joanna Mae Ricote; RMN DXIC Iligan Station Manager Ghiner Cabanday; PBS Radyo Pilipinas Broadcast Program Producer Sharif Timhar Habib Majid; Philippine News Agency Bureau Chief Nef Lucson; Net25 Correspondent Laura Pobadora; MisOr Radyo Media Events Marketing Director at Reporter Stephanie Berganio; at Malindang Newscooper Mobile Journalist Nyce Grace Cabajar.

Upang mas maunawaan nila kung paano naaabot at napaglilingkuran ng CARD MRI ang mga komunidad, hinati ang mga kalahok sa dalawang grupo para sa pagbisita sa mga center meeting. Ang unang grupo ay nagtungo sa CARD, Inc. Balulang 1A Center habang bumisita naman ang ikalawang grupo sa CARD SME Bank Piaping Puti Center.

Sa kanilang pagbisita, nasaksihan nila kung paano isinasagawa ang mga center meeting at kung paano nagagawa ng mga miyembro ang kanilang mga transaksyong pinansyal, kabilang ang pagbabayad ng loan,

nang hindi na kailangang bumiyahe papunta sa opisina o bangko. Malaking tulong ito lalo na sa mga naninirahan sa malalayong lugar.

Binisita rin ng mga mamamahayag ang ilang tanggapan ng CARD MRI sa Cagayan de Oro City, kabilang ang CARD, Inc., CARD SME Bank, Inc., CARD Mutual Benefit Association (CARD MBA), at CARD Pioneer Microinsurance Inc. (CPMI). Sa pamamagitan nito, mas nakita nila kung paano nagtutulungan ang iba't ibang institusyon ng CARD MRI upang makapagbigay ng komprehensibong suporta sa mga kliyente at komunidad.

Bukod sa pag-aaral tungkol sa mga operasyon ng CARD MRI, nagkaroon din ng pagkakataon ang mga kalahok na makausap ang ilan sa mga kliyenteng natulungan ng organisasyon. Kabilang dito ang mag-asawang Jaime at Candelaria Bedro na nagpakita ng kanilang mga produktong chicharon at longganisa. Nakatikim din ang mga mamamahayag ng puto maya at sikwate na inihanda ni Nice Nanol, isang kliyente ng CARD SME Bank sa loob ng mahigit 15 taon.

Kasama rin sa programa ang storytelling session para sa mga bata na pinangunahan ng CARD MRI Publishing House gamit ang aklat pambata na Ang Lapis ni Anya. Dinaluhan ito ng 21 bata at naglalayong hikayatin silang mas maging interesado sa pagbabasa. Layunin din ng aktibidad na mabawasan ang labis na paggamit ng mga gadyet at iba pang elektroniks ng mga bata.

Sa huling araw ng programa, nagsagawa naman ng media briefing upang sagutin ang mga katanungan ng mga mamamahayag tungkol sa mga operasyon ng CARD MRI. Dumalo rito sina CARD MBA Deputy Director for Operations Janicekith Navera, CARD MBA Cluster Manager Ann Jaraine Balacuit, CARD

SSS TAPS TECH FIRM STANDARD ECONOMICS FOR MICRO LOAN INITIATIVE

QUEZON CITY — The Social Security System (SSS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Non-Disclosure Agreement with Standard Economics on 3 July 2026 to support the development and implementation of the SSS Micro Loan Program, also known as SSS LoanLite, a proposed digital microloan facility designed to provide members with faster, safer, and more affordable access to short-term financial assistance.

The initiative is intended to help SSS members access financial support with greater speed, security, and convenience, while strengthening the infrastructure used to assess, distribute, and service financial assistance at scale.

SSS President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Joseph M. de Claro and Standard Economics President and Chief Executive Officer Evan Stanley Jones inked the MOU to formalize the partnership and leverage

the company's Economic Superintelligence platform. "Standard Economics is honored to support SSS in its mission to serve Filipino workers and their families," said Evan. "Our goal is to provide modern financial infrastructure that helps institutions deliver support faster, safer, and more efficiently. We believe everyday, people deserve access to financial products that are trusted, high quality, and built around their needs."

Standard Economics' Economic Superintelligence platform combines secure financial infrastructure with advanced intelligence systems for identity, AI risk assessment, AI underwriting, payments, AI fraud prevention, and data security. The platform is designed to help governments and institutions move, allocate, and manage money at population scale while improving the member experience.

De Claro thanked Standard Economics for partnering with SSS to fulfill its mission of serving the Filipino people.

"Your organization may be relatively new to the industry, but it shows a great promise through its innovations that enable faster loan disbursement, lower transaction costs, greater financial inclusion, automated processes

and real-time monitoring," he said. "By leveraging blockchain technology and digital payments, you have the potential to be a true game changer."

He noted that the partnership supports President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s vision of positioning the Philippines as open for business in terms of investments, further reinforced by the country's recent classification by the World Bank as an upper middle-income economy.

He also highlighted Finance Secretary and Social Security Commission Chairperson Frederick D. Go's vision of using technology to deliver faster services with lower fees for loan borrowers, adding that he is proud that, through SSS' partnership with Standard Economics, the institution will leverage AI to strengthen security controls and improve advanced audit capabilities in support of the SSS LoanLite Program.

Standard Economics said the Philippines is an important market for its broader mission of expanding access to modern financial services. The company is building financial infrastructure to give everyday people a pathway to economic security, open participation in the modern economy, and long-term wealth creation. #



Social Security System (SSS) President and Chief Executive Officer Robert Joseph M. de Claro (4th from left) and Standard Economics President and Chief Executive Officer Evan Stanley Jones (3rd from left) inked the MOU to formalize the partnership for the implementation of the upcoming SSS Micro Loan Program. Also present during the MOU signing representing Standard Economics were James Musk (2nd from left), Paul Del Vecchio (left), Juan Paolo Villonco, and Atty. Mark Tiaoqui while representing SSS include Social Security Commission (SSC) Commissioner Victor Alfonso A. Limlingan (5th from left), Senior Vice President for Lending and Asset Management Group Pedro T. Baoy (6th from left), and SSS Senior Vice President for Member Services and Support Group Joy A. Villacorta (right).

MBA Provincial Manager Francis Ann Vargas, CARD SME Bank Area Manager Mark Ordiz, CARD SME Bank Acting Area Manager Mary Chris Momville, CARD Pioneer Provincial Leader Joyce Sanoy, CARD Pioneer FPRO Joecil Abenoja, at CARD, Inc. Unit Managers Mary Ann Buhoy, April Jane Adece, at Ritchel Santua. Nakatakdang idaos sa Laguna sa Agosto 2026 ang ikatlong PANAGHIUSA: CARD MRI Exposure Tour Program. Patuloy na isinasagawa ng CARD MRI ang mga ganitong programa upang mas mapalawak ang kaalaman ng publiko tungkol sa microfinance at sa mga serbisyong nakatutulong sa pagpapabuti ng buhay ng mga Pilipino.

Para sa karagdagang impormasyon tungkol sa CARD MRI, bisitahin ang opisyal nitong website sa cardmri.com o ang Facebook page nito na CARD MRI Official. **JOSEPHINE RAMOS,** Junior Writer

PBBM SEEKS STRONGER INDO-PACIFIC TRADE, INVESTMENT COOPERATION

MANILA – President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. on Thursday pushed for a stronger trade and investment cooperation among Indo-Pacific economies during his meeting with regional investors as part of his working visit to Singapore. Marcos met with leaders of the Future Economic Cooperation Council (FECC), an India-based economic platform that brings together government and business leaders to promote free trade, investment flows, and resilient economic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Presidential communications Office (PCO) said the meet-and-greet focused on strengthening partnerships between governments and businesses amid an evolving global economic landscape.

"The discussion focused on how government and business can work together to navigate a changing global economy and unlock new opportunities for the region," the PCO said in a statement.

The PCO said the engagement underscored shared priorities in

advancing balanced development, fostering innovation, and enhancing economic resilience across the region.

The discussions also highlighted the importance of strengthening economic cooperation among governments, businesses, and other sectors to address emerging challenges and promote inclusive growth.

"These efforts support stronger trade and investment partnerships while helping shape a more innovative, connected, and prosperous future for the region," the PCO said.

The meeting was part of Marcos' efforts to engage regional business leaders and investors during his working visit to Singapore, where he is promoting the Philippines as an attractive destination for trade and investment.

The visit also aligns with the administration's broader agenda of expanding economic cooperation with regional partners, attracting more investments, and strengthening the country's participation in the rapidly growing Indo-Pacific economy. **(PNA) BY RUTH ABBEY GITA-CARLOS**

DA LIFTS TEMPORARY IMPORT BAN ON LIVESTOCK GOODS FROM HUNGARY

MANILA – The Department of Agriculture (DA) on Thursday said it has lifted the temporary import ban on livestock animals and products from Hungary.

This came after the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) declared the European country free from foot-and-mouth disease (FMD).

The agency issued Department Circular 34 allowing the resumption of imports of FMD-susceptible animals, meat, and animal by-products from Hungary.

In a statement, DA Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. said the "science-based" decision demonstrates the balance between safeguarding the country's animal health and food security.

"We remain uncompromising in protecting the country's livestock industry from transboundary animal

diseases, but we also recognize the importance of keeping reliable supply channels open once international standards confirm that risks have been effectively managed," he said.

The lifting, likewise, backs the agency's efforts to diversify supply sources and reduce risks and unnecessary price pressures due to market volatility.

Among risks that may prompt market shocks are global disease outbreaks, climate-related disruptions, and volatile food markets.

"This balanced approach strengthens food security and helps stabilize prices for Filipino consumers," Tiu Laurel said.

The resumption of importation from Hungary, meanwhile, may take effect 15 days after the official publication on the DA's official website and registration with the

15K WORKERS GET P3-B MONETARY BENEFITS VIA DISPUTE RESOLUTION - DOLE

MANILA – The National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB), under the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), said Wednesday it has released about PHP3.07 billion in monetary benefits, benefiting 15,716 workers nationwide.

The Board, citing data from its preliminary Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programs as of June 30, said it has sustained effective implementation of labor dispute resolution mechanisms through preventive mediation, the handling of notices of strike and lockout, voluntary arbitration, the Single-Entry Approach (SEnA), and other dispute prevention and resolution initiatives.

Of the total amount, Voluntary Arbitration accounted for PHP2.43 billion benefiting 1,153 workers, while Preventive Mediation facilitated PHP101 million for 7,059 workers.

The Single-Entry Approach generated PHP199.57 million, benefiting 2,714 workers; Notices of Strike/Lockout facilitated PHP304.47 million, benefiting 4,593 workers; and Actual Strikes/Lockouts resulted in PHP29.59 million, benefiting 198 workers.

Among the ADR programs, NCMB handled 3,146 Requests for Assistance (RFAs) through its Single-Entry Approach (SEnA)

and posted a 99 percent disposition rate and a 77 percent settlement rate, with an average settlement period of only eight days.

The Preventive Mediation (PM) program also recorded 190 new cases involving 36,587 workers, for a total of 221 cases handled. The program achieved an 87 percent disposition rate and an 83 percent settlement rate, resulting in 166 settled cases.

Meanwhile, it added that the Notices of Strike/Lockout (NS/L) program handled 68 cases, including 57 newly filed notices, achieving an 84 percent disposition rate and a 74 percent settlement rate.

A total of 43 notices were successfully resolved, helping prevent potential work stoppages through timely conciliation and mediation. For Actual Strikes/Lockouts (AS/L), the Board monitored four work stoppages nationwide, all of which were disposed of within the prescribed process cycle time.

The DOLE said it remains committed to strengthening alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and promoting industrial peace through effective conciliation, mediation, arbitration, and labor-management partnership programs. **(PNA) BY FERDINAND PATINIO**

DOH WARNS VS. MISINFORMATION ON DEWORMING CAMPAIGN

MANILA – The Department of Health (DOH) called on parents, guardians, schools and communities to support its nationwide deworming campaign this July, emphasizing that the initiative is a safe and proven defense against intestinal worms.

In a statement Thursday, the DOH explained that children are highly vulnerable to soil-transmitted helminths, or

Office of the National Administrative Register.

Last year, the DA issued DA Memorandum Order 16, series of 2025, to serve as a precautionary action following an FMD outbreak in the European nation.

(PNA) BY STEPHANIE SEVILLANO

intestinal worms, due to their frequent contact with contaminated soil.

Leaving these infections untreated can lead to "poor nutrition, anemia, stunted physical growth, delayed learning, and reduced resistance to other illnesses," while also negatively impacting a child's school attendance and academic performance, it said.

The national deworming campaign utilizes Albendazole, a World Health Organization-recommended medication that has been a staple of the country's public health efforts for nearly 30 years.

While the DOH assured the public that the medicine is generally safe and well-tolerated, it noted that some children may experience mild and temporary side

MANILA – Twelve Filipino human trafficking survivors safely arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Terminal 1 in Pasay City aboard Philippine Airlines Flight PR 2622 on Wednesday, following their rescue and repatriation from Cambodia.

In a news release, the Department of Migrant Workers said the group arrived with Secretary Hans Leo Cacdac, who travelled to Cambodia for the opening of its Migrant Workers Office in Phnom Penh, to strengthen the protection and welfare of overseas Filipino workers in the region.

"Tutulungan po namin kayo na mabigyan ng ibang options para kumita at masuportahan ang pamilya ninyo, upang hindi na ninyo kailangang bumalik sa Cambodia (We will assist you to have other options to earn and be able to support your family, so that you will not need to go back to Cambodia anymore)," Cacdac assured the survivors.

He said the government would provide them with opportunities to help them transition and reintegrate into the country.

Upon arrival, the group was received by a joint government team composed of the DMW Central Office and National Capital Region, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA),

the NAIA Task Force Against Trafficking (NAIA TFAT), and the Department of Justice – Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (DOJ-IACAT).

The repatriates were provided with immediate airport and financial assistance from the DMW and OWWA, as well as onward transportation and temporary hotel accommodations before they return to their respective home provinces.

The DMW said they will also be provided with legal support.

Included in the group were a distressed mother and her baby, who were endorsed to the DMW by the Philippine Embassy for immediate assistance.

Meanwhile, the DMW cautioned the public anew against responding to unverified job offers, especially those posted on social media platforms, while urging job seekers to verify all overseas employment opportunities directly with the government to avoid being victimized by human trafficking schemes.

Illegal recruitment activities and suspicious job offers can be reported to the DMW's Migrant Workers Protection Bureau (MWPB) through its hotlines (02) 8722-1144 or (02) 8722-1155. **(PNA) BY MARITA MOAJE**

citizens to rely only on verified advisories from the health department.

It warned that sharing unverified reports or misleading claims could cause unnecessary public anxiety and discourage families from participating in the essential health program.

On July 3, news reports cited the death of an 8-year-old learner due to a central nervous system infection.

The pupil received Albendazole as part of routine deworming at Hugo Perez Elementary School-Annex in Trece Martires City, Cavite on July 2.

The National Bureau of Investigation said that it would investigate the pupil's death. **(PNA) BY MA. TERESA MONTEMAYOR**

LANDBANK EXTENDS P4-B LOAN TO CITICORE RENEWABLE ENERGY CORP.

MANILA — State-owned Land Bank of the Philippines (LandBank) and Citicore Renewable Energy Corporation (CREC) signed a PHP4.05-billion project finance loan facility agreement to accelerate the completion of its two solar projects under Citicore Solar Embedded, Inc. (CS Embedded).

In a statement Wednesday, LandBank said the signing was held on July 14, led by CREC Chairman Edgar Saavedra and LandBank President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Lynette Ortiz.

LandBank said the amount will fund the development of two 41-megawatt-peak (MWp) solar power plants and 53 megawatt-hour (MWh) battery energy storage systems embedded within the distribution utility companies in Pampanga and Nueva Ecija.

Upon completion, these projects will add a total of 82 MWp and 106 MWh to the Group's combined installed capacity.

"Our vision to Power a First World Philippines aligns with LandBank's commitment to sustainable

nation-building, enabling us to accelerate the delivery of renewable energy projects that advance the country's energy transition and create lasting value for Filipino communities," CREC President and CEO Oliver Tan said.

"This collaboration also underscores the critical role of public-private partnerships in advancing the Department of Energy's target of increasing renewable energy's share in the country's power generation mix to 50% by 2040."

Meanwhile, LandBank said the partnership is part of its continued support for investments that promote both economic growth and environmental sustainability.

"Our partnership with CREC reflects LandBank's commitment to financing transformative projects that expand access to reliable power, create opportunities, and accelerate the country's green transition. We are fully committed to ensuring our rural communities benefit from a cleaner, more secure energy grid," Ortiz said. (PNA) **BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

PSEI DROPS, PESO WEAKENS AMID RENEWED MIDDLE EAST TENSIONS

MANILA — Fresh military actions between the United States and Iran resulted in the negative close of the Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) and the peso Tuesday.

The main index shed 0.15 percent to 6,256.02 points, and the broader All Shares by 0.10 percent to 3,379.94 points.

Half of the sectoral gauges also ended in the negative territory, namely Holding Firms, 0.84 percent; Property, 0.35 percent; and Financials, 0.16 percent.

On the other hand, Mining and Oil rose 1.30 percent, Services by 0.29 percent; and Industrial by 0.07 percent.

Volume was thin at 673.92 million shares amounting to PHP5.3 billion.

"The local market's sideways movement today ended in the negative territory as worries over the US-Iran tensions and its upward effect on global oil prices weighed on investors' sentiment," Philstocks Research said.

Meanwhile, the local currency depreciated against the U.S. dollar and closed the day at 61.71 from 60.59 the previous day.

It opened the day at 61.68, weaker than the 61.61 start in the previous session.

The peso traded between 61.73 and 61.66, bringing the day's average to 61.69.

Volume reached USD995.28, up from day-ago's USD957.5 million. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

ERC MOVES TO TIGHTEN SELECTION PROCESS FOR POWER SUPPLY DEALS

GAPAN, Nueva Ecija — The Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) is looking into gaps on the competitive selection process (CSP) for power supply deals, citing the need to protect end consumers.

ERC Chair and Chief Executive Officer Francis Saturnino Juan said distribution utilities must enter into power supply agreements (PSAs) based on the power supply procurement plans (PSPP) that have been approved by the Department of Energy (DOE).

"But no one's looking at the terms of reference, and we think that it is important for us to be able to have an understanding of what the utilities are subjecting to bidding, what capacity, what requirements, how long, who will be entitled or who will be qualified," he said in a media interview.

Juan said this information is necessary for the regulator to determine whether "there may be some things that are being done that will limit competition."

"And we don't want that to happen, that there are provisions that will affect how the competition will

actually work during the CSP process," he added.

Last week, Juan announced that ERC is considering to tighten CSP rules to ensure least-cost and competitive power supply rates for distribution utilities, which will benefit the end-consumers.

Under the proposed rules, distribution utilities and the system operators must first submit the terms of reference (TOR) for ERC assessment before they make public any invitation to bid.

Juan said among the factors they will look into are specifics on the eligibility of some bid participants to provide supply.

"That limits the number of participants. So, that will affect the quality of the competition that will happen," he said.

Juan said they "shifted the focus of the ERC in the PSA review to look at the outcome and the process by which the outcome was reached, and that is the CSP."

"Since we are putting a premium on the compliance with the process, we have to make sure that indeed there is competition happening," he said. (PNA) **BY JOANN VILLANUEVA**

SUCS KEY TO TURNING RESEARCH INTO JOBS, GROWTH — DEPDEV

MANILA — State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) must play a bigger role in transforming research into real-world solutions that create jobs and better lives for Filipinos, the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev) said.

In a statement Tuesday, DEPDev said Secretary Arsenio Balisacan called SUCs one of the country's greatest assets during his speech at the 2026 Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC) Annual Convention and General Assembly.

"Our universities continue to produce talented graduates and excellent researchers, but many still work under resource constraints that limit what they can accomplish," he said.

Balisacan said SUCs are at the center of the nation's

efforts to develop talent, generate knowledge and translate research into solutions that address real-world challenges.

Strengthening the country's innovation pipeline will require sustained investments in innovation and stronger support for research aligned with national priorities, he said.

Balisacan said innovation is not the achievement of a single individual or institution but the result of collaboration between the government, academe, industry, civil society and development partners.

"Our challenge is to build an environment where ideas move more quickly—from the classroom to the laboratory, from the laboratory to industry, and from innovation to better lives for our people," he added.

Balisacan said key frameworks are already in place to give a shared

PH SECURES \$6.8-M GRANT TO BOOST CLIMATE INVESTMENTS

MANILA — The Green Climate Fund (GCF) extended a USD6.78 million grant to help the Philippines implement climate investments that will protect communities from the impacts of climate change, accelerate the transition to clean energy and support sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

In a statement Wednesday, the Department of Finance (DOF) said the Third Readiness and Preparatory Support Program (RPSP 3) makes the Philippines the first country in Asia and the Pacific to access GCF readiness support under the Fund's second replenishment period (GCF-2), covering 2024 to 2027.

Grants are aids given by development partners with no obligation for repayment.

Approved on June 24, 2026, the 60-month program will strengthen the country's capacity to access, develop, and implement climate investments aligned with the National Adaptation Plan and the Nationally Determined Contribution Implementation Plan.

RPSP 3 will strengthen inter-agency coordination among key climate institutions, develop a robust pipeline of projects aligned with national priorities, and enhance knowledge management and monitoring systems.

It incorporates inputs from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Climate Change Commission, Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and Technology and other key institutions, reflecting strong national ownership and alignment with the country's climate and sustainable development priorities.

"We welcome the GCF's approval of this grant. More than financial support, it is an investment in the Philippines' ability to turn climate ambition into action and deliver lasting benefits for the Filipino people," Undersecretary Joven Z. Balbosa said.

The Global Green Growth Institute will serve as the DOF's delivery partner, while the United Nations Development Programme and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit will serve as co-implementers.

The DOF said it is also preparing a second proposal under the GCF Country-Driven Readiness window, which may provide up to USD3 million in additional grant support.

"This readiness grant from the GCF will strengthen climate action in the Philippines by enhancing institutional capacity, reinforcing existing coordination mechanisms, and accelerating the development of a strong project pipeline further supporting country ownership," GCF Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific Hemant Mandal said.

The DOF is the Philippines' National Designated Authority to the GCF, leading efforts to access climate financing and ensure projects align with national priorities. (PNA) **BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**

alone. It is achieved by institutions that work together toward a common purpose." (PNA) **BY ANNA LEAH GONZALES**



VIETNAM MARCHES TO SEA MEN'S V CUP SEMIS

MANILA — Vietnam defeated Myanmar, 25-18, 25-23, 25-19, to reach the semifinals Friday in the SEA Men's V Cup Leg 1 at the Candon City Arena in Ilocos Sur.

Nguyen Ngoc Thuan delivered 22 points on 17 attacks, four aces and a block, while Pham Quoc Du chipped in 13 points, all on attacks, as Vietnam bounced back from a four-set loss to Thailand.

Kyaw Aung Myo was the only player who reached double-figure scores for Myanmar, delivering 13 points on 12 attacks and an ace.

Thailand topped Group B with a 2-0 record, while Myanmar went 0-2 and will go to the classification match for fifth and sixth spots.

At stake in the zonal meet, presented by the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Olympic Committee and the City

of Candon headed by Mayor Eric D. Singson, are all-important FIVB world ranking points.

Vietnam, playing its first official FIVB-sanctioned tournament since tapping Italy's Federico Rampazzo just over a month ago, entered the Sea V Cup ranked 62nd.

Indonesia heads the field

at 44th, buoyed by the title triumph at the Asian Volleyball Confederation Men's Cup just last month in Ahmedabad, India.

In Pool A are Thailand, which started the event ranked 66th, Alas Pilipinas at 90th and Cambodia 117th. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**



SEMIS BOUND. Vietnam opposite spiker Pham Quoc Du in action against Myanmar in the SEA Men's V Cup at the Candon City Arena in Ilocos Sur on Friday (July 17, 2026). Vietnam won, 25-18, 25-23, 25-19, to reach the semis. (SAVA photo)

PH BAGS 30 MEDALS IN SINGAPORE YOUTH ARCHERY CHAMPIONSHIPS

MANILA — The national team that brought home 30 medals from the recent Singapore Youth Archery Championships paid a courtesy call on Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) officials, according to a news release Thursday.

PSC Chair Patrick Gregorio and Commissioner Edward Hayco welcomed the 21 athletes, accompanied by five coaches and five officials, who presented their medals (13 golds, 10 silvers and seven bronzes) on Wednesday.

The national archery team has two foreign coaches -- Ryu Su Jeng, who steered South Korea

to five gold medals in the 2016 and 2020 Olympics, and Hong Sung Chil, a gold medalist in the 1999 World Championships.

"This is the resurgence of Philippine archery," Gregorio said in a statement.

He described the performance in Singapore as a "perfect bullseye."

China, Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Australia and Laos also joined the three-day tournament for athletes 18 years old and below.

"It's time to bring back the glory days of Philippine archery. This is for the

country," Bing Reaport, World Archery Philippines head, said.

The gold medalists on the final day of the competition were Mariano Matteo Medina (men's U15 recurve), General Marc Bangoy (men's U18 recurve), Leila Jell Cano (women's U18 recurve), Mateusz Vaughn Johnson (men's U18 compound and Abigail Lim (women's U21 compound); while Chass Mhavian Colas (men's U18 recurve and Zac Zayco (men's U18 compound) bagged silver medals. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

REYES CUP, PHILIPPINES OPEN POOL CHAMPIONSHIP RETURN IN OCTOBER

MANILA — The World Nineball Tour, in partnership with Puyat Sports, announced Tuesday the return of the Reyes Cup and the Philippines Open Pool Championship.

The Reyes Cup will be held on Oct. 15-18 followed by the Philippines Open Pool Championship on Oct. 20-24 at the Gateway Mall in Quezon City.

Team Asia, led by the legendary Francisco "Django" Bustamante, will defend the Reyes Cup as back-to-back champions following their commanding 11-3 victory in 2025.

Ralf Souquet, one of the sport's all-time greats, is taking charge of Team Rest of the World for the first time.

"Bringing both the Reyes

Cup and the Philippines Open back in 2026 fills us with enormous pride. With the Reyes Cup returning alongside the Philippines Open at Gateway Mall, and Filipino fans who are simply the best in the world, we cannot wait to welcome everyone back to Manila for another unforgettable October," stated Aristeo "Putch" Puyat in a news release Tuesday.

The 2025 inaugural edition set a new benchmark for what a Matchroom Major can be: a brutal single elimination format, a Colosseum-like arena that placed players at the heart of a roaring crowd, and Spain's David Alcaide crowned champion after a masterclass of composure under the most intense

pressure imaginable.

Fans are excited to watch reigning world champion Carlo Biado claim the title on Filipino soil.

"The Philippines is the home of pool — and these two events prove it every October. The talent we have here in Asia is incredible, but it is the fans who make Manila like nowhere else in the world. When that crowd gets behind you, it is something you never forget. I am so proud of what the Reyes Cup and the Philippines Open have become, and I know our fans will make October 2026 very special once again," said Reyes. (PNA) **BY JEAN MALANUM**

GROUP EXPANDS GRASSROOTS SEARCH FOR NEXT GENERATION OF PARA-ATHLETES

BAGUIO CITY — The Philippine Sports Association for the Differently Abled (PHILSPADA) is stepping up its grassroots recruitment program to discover and develop more para-athletes who can represent the country in international competitions.

Speaking during a media briefing marking the 48th National Disability Rights Week on Tuesday, PHILSPADA President Michael Barredo said the organization is working with government agencies, local government units, schools and civic organizations to identify promising athletes, particularly the youth.

"We will continue to do this and eventually reach out to more Filipinos," he said.

He said PHILSPADA is working with the Department of Education to expand para-sports events in school competitions from four to six, creating more opportunities to recruit athletes at an early age.

Barredo said the association is conducting grassroots activities, including coaches' training and mini competitions in Baguio City, to identify potential national team members.

PHILSPADA, an organization under the Philippine Sports Commission established

more than 30 years ago, promotes sports participation among persons with disabilities while helping build their confidence and open opportunities for recreation and professional competition.

Barredo said the national pool now has 232 para-athletes and 64 coaches who receive government allowances, benefits and incentives.

He said Filipino para-athletes continue to excel internationally, proving they can compete alongside the world's best.

Among the recent milestones was the induction of Ifugao powerlifter Adeline Ancheta Dumapong into the Hall of Fame of national athletes on June 26, making her one of seven para-athletes to receive the honor.

The Philippine team won

33 medals, including eight golds, at the Asian Para Games in Dubai in December 2025, finishing 13th among 33 participating countries.

It also collected 144 medals, including 45 golds, at the ASEAN Para Games in Thailand in January, improving its overall finish from the usual fifth or sixth place to fourth.

Barredo said sports have transformed the lives of many para-athletes, enabling some to build homes, start livelihoods and achieve financial independence through their accomplishments.

"They thought they would not reach anything because of their condition but through sports, their achievements have progressed and developed," he added. (PNA) **BY LIZA AGOOT**



Michael Barredo, president of the Philippine Sports Association for the Differently Abled (PNA photo by Liza T. Agoot)